



◀ BRISTOL BOYS & GIRLS CLUB GRANT

In April, I was pleased to present a check for a \$45,000 state grant to the Bristol Boys & Girls Club. Accepting the grant was Jay Maia, director of the Cambridge Park Outreach Unit, and Cambridge Park residents.

AID FOR OUR TOWNS

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 31st state Senate District is ensuring Bristol, Harwinton, Plainville and Plymouth receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state in Fiscal Year 2008–2009:

	Fiscal Year 08-09
Total Education Grants	\$66,626,604
Town Aid Road Fund Grant	\$742,649
Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Fund Grant	\$1,238,564
Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP)	\$792,847
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$1,000,475
Total	\$70,401,138

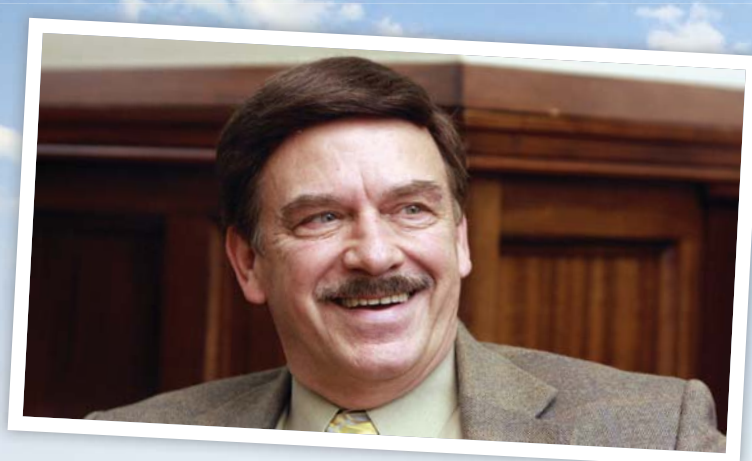
ALLOWING SENIORS TO RECEIVE CARE AT HOME

Many seniors who require long-term care would prefer to receive that care in their own home or with a relative caregiver. For many, that is not an option due to Medicaid reimbursement rules. A federal program called ‘Money Follows the Person’ allows Medicaid funds to ‘follow the patient’ from nursing homes to more personalized settings. The state program can currently enroll 700 seniors, but we expanded the program to accommodate up to 5,000. The state’s reimbursement rate for those in the program will climb from 50 to 75 percent for each enrollee. Most seniors prefer home care when complete independence is no longer possible, and this federal/state partnership grants that wish while shoring up the state’s finances.



KEEPING JOBS AND TAX REVENUE IN CONNECTICUT

Many Connecticut-based companies are losing state contracts to out-of-state companies. Instead of using state contracts to create jobs here, all too often multi-million dollar contracts are awarded to consulting firms in Arizona, printers in Michigan, and so on. I helped to pass a bill that will keep more of our tax dollars and jobs in Connecticut. The ‘reciprocal preference’ or ‘Golden Rule’ bill levels the playing field for local companies competing with certain out-of-state companies. The bill ensures that if another state offers an advantage to its own companies, then we do the same for our companies when they try to win a contract with the State of Connecticut.



Dear Neighbor,

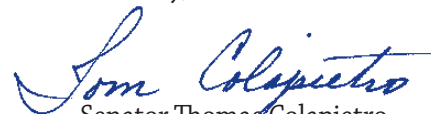
By almost any measure, people across the nation and state know that we are in a recession and people are feeling the effects.

We are facing uncertain times with a biennial budget that makes important investments in local school, roads, health care, school readiness, municipal aid, criminal justice programs and other vital needs.

However, state revenue forecasts continue to drop, and just as our families are tightening their belts, so must our state government. We held the line on any new spending during the last session, and were still able to find ways to help the people of our state by enacting long-needed reforms in our criminal justice system, health care, consumer protection, and environment.

For any additional help please feel free to call my office at 860-240-0475 or toll free at 1-800-842-1420.

Sincerely,


Senator Thomas Colapietro
31st District



State Senator Thomas Colapietro

Legislative Office Building, Room 3500, Hartford, CT 06106-1591


Capitol Phone: 240-0475 Toll-free: 1-800-842-1420

E-mail: Colapietro@senatedems.ct.gov

Web: www.SenatorColapietro.cga.ct.gov



I'm proud to
represent the
31st Senate District:
Bristol
Harwinton
Plainville
Plymouth

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State Senator
Thomas Colapietro
31ST DISTRICT



LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

PROTECTING HOMEOWNERS & OUR ECONOMY

This year, I supported comprehensive legislation designed to keep families in their homes and proactively protect our state’s economy from the national subprime mortgage crisis. Across the country, quality of life is being diminished, home values are plummeting, and families are faced with difficult choices as home foreclosure rates have skyrocketed 75 percent since 2006.

About 71,000 Connecticut mortgages are adjustable-rate, high-interest subprime mortgages, and 21,000 of those will reset to a higher rate in the next 12 months.

The legislation we passed created a special loan program which allows the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to purchase home loans from lenders and place eligible borrowers on affordable payment schedules for 30-year fixed-rate mortgages. We also re-initiated the state’s Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program and gave CHFA the authority to purchase foreclosed homes to create affordable and supportive housing. These programs will help thousands of Connecticut families and will help prevent the mass foreclosures other states have experienced over the past year.

Additionally, we created a foreclosure mediation program for lenders and borrowers, established a mortgage crisis job training team, and created new restrictions and licensing requirements for mortgage lenders and brokers to prevent predatory lending practices in the future. All these initiatives were created without increasing state spending.



CRACKING DOWN ON HATE CRIMES

Last year, Connecticut suffered through a rash of racist, intimidating noose incidents. A black Coast Guard Academy cadet found a noose in his luggage and, months later, another noose was left in the office of a Coast Guard race relations officer. A half-dozen nooses were found at construction sites in Stamford and West Hartford and in a West Hartford home improvement store. Another noose was left under the patrol car of a black Bridgeport police officer.

Nooses are a repugnant symbol of racial hatred rooted in the lynching of black Americans. This session, the General Assembly unanimously passed, and Governor Rell signed, legislation that makes it a hate crime—on par with cross burning—to hang a noose on public or private property with the intent to intimidate or harass another person.



CLOSING SEXUAL OFFENDER LOOPHOLES

There are nearly 5,000 sex offenders living in Connecticut. The state’s sex offender Web site averages over 1 million visits per year from concerned parents and others seeking to keep their loved ones safe. The General Assembly is doing its part by passing a bill that prohibits a sex offender from changing his or her name without

first notifying the public safety commissioner, and by requiring the sex offender to sign a sworn affidavit that they are not seeking to avoid the legal consequences of their criminal conviction. Regardless of any possible name change, all sex offenders must still provide the state police with their name, address, date of birth, and other personal information.

FIGHTING THE HIGH COST OF GASOLINE & ENERGY

We all know that the cost of fuel is sky-high—affecting how much you pay for gas and groceries. While we can’t stop fuel prices from rising, we can prevent tax increases from further driving up the price. This June, we said NO to a scheduled increase in the gas tax. By blocking the tax hike we’re saving you a few cents on each gallon, and that adds up—

approximately \$30 million worth of relief for motorists this year. We’re also taking action to help seniors and working families survive the high cost of the looming home heating oil season.



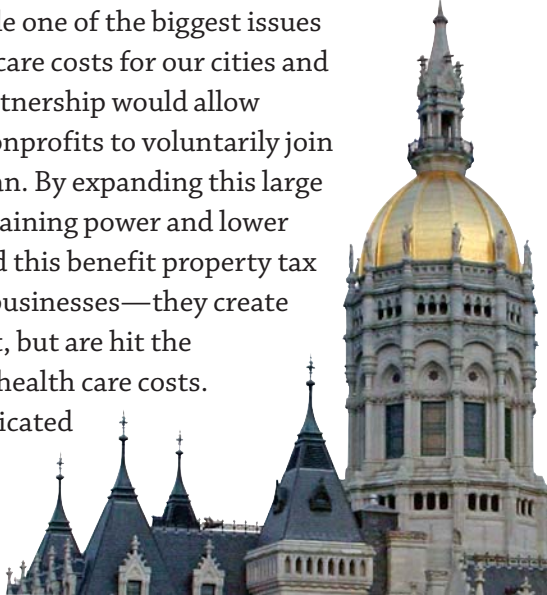
IMPROVING HOSPITAL STAFFING

In an effort to ensure that patients receive the care and attention they deserve during a hospital stay, the General Assembly unanimously passed a new law requiring hospitals to formalize staffing protocols for nurses. The law mandates that each facility make available to the state Department of Public Health its plan to ensure nursing coverage that will provide maximum direct patient care.



LOWERING HEALTH CARE COSTS FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND SMALL BUSINESSES

This legislative session we tried to tackle one of the biggest issues driving up our property taxes—health care costs for our cities and towns. The Connecticut Healthcare Partnership would allow municipalities, small businesses and nonprofits to voluntarily join the state employee health insurance plan. By expanding this large pool of insured, we would increase bargaining power and lower costs for municipalities. Not only would this benefit property tax payers, but it would also benefit small businesses—they create the vast majority of jobs in Connecticut, but are hit the hardest when it comes to skyrocketing health care costs. As of this writing, the governor has indicated that she will veto this bill.



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